

2 April 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Current Intelligence

SUBJECT : A Fresh Approach to the Problem of
Basic Intelligence

Maybe this
is to be
a whole new
in

Amf
1911

3. My recommendations:

a) The NIS, as an interagency coordinated program, should be dropped.

b) Each USIB agency should be charged with maintaining the basic data it sees as essential to its mission, with the IC staff overseeing the process.

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c) CIA would be charged with responsibility for maintaining basic political, economic, sociological, and geographic data as a function of common concern and for producing basic intelligence for the general consumer.

d) OBGI would convert the mechanism it now has for managing and processing the NIS to managing and processing CIA basic intelligence production.

e) A new basic intelligence product tailored specifically to the needs of the general consumer should be developed for unilateral production by CIA. The OCI Country Handbook series could then be discontinued. The present General Survey might serve as a base for the new product but with these modifications:

1) The portions primarily serving departmental needs should be dropped. These include:

- Most of the Transportation and Telecommunications chapter
- Military Geography
- Armed Forces
- Intelligence and Security
- Most of the Science chapter

2) The Armed Forces and Intelligence and Security material should be summarized in the political chapter.

3) The sociological, political, and economic chapters should be pruned considerably.

4) The Country Profile should relate the country to US national interests.

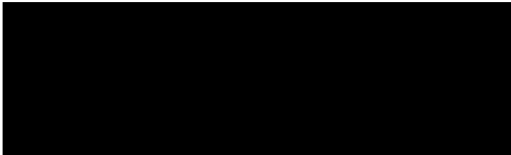
f) The new product should concentrate on countries about which U.S. officials know the least and on which basic data are far

too skimpy now. There should be no need to "educate" about the more familiar countries--France, for example.

g) The "NIS Factbook," a most useful compendium, should be continued. It has not had to suffer from interagency coordination in the past so could be produced without change in the process.

4. Providing the general consumer with basic intelligence textbooks on unfamiliar places is a useful service but not as essential, perhaps, as sometimes argued. What is essential is that, when needed, the Community be able to provide--or know where to go to get--basic political, economic, military, sociological and geographic data on every country where there is a U.S. interest. Programmed production of basic intelligence materials forces analysts to update their information in a systematic way thus providing discipline for maintenance and improvement of the data bank. Much of the work must be done in any event, but it will be done better if it is to be published on a regularly scheduled basis.

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